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563 Hsining are the remnants of the once much more powerful tribes that withdrew at the beginning of the Mongol dynasty to the Kukunor region. Those who stayed behind submitted to the jurisdiction of the officials of the settled districts. There is little cohesion among them. Those who call themselves a tribe are rarely under the control of a single chief. Tribal matters are more usually disposed of by the elders of the group. The religion of all these Tibetans is Lama Buddhism. The prevailing sect is that of the Yellow Hats or reformed sect, but in the southern districts there is a fairly strong survival of the older Red Hat sect. Shamanism also continues to flourish among the Tibetans, in spite of Buddhism; their shamans are reputed to be the most powerful in the country. There are a few Tibetans living near Hsünhua who have become Muslims.

MONGUORS

563 In the seven sub-prefectures of Hsining there were
175 then living sixteen clans of Monguors, to which should
618 be added the Liench'eng clan, living in the territory of the sub-prefecture of P'ingfan. The word "clan" has been used in many senses in the literature of the social sciences. It is here used in a special sense, and for lack of a more precise term, to describe a group of people ruled by the same chief, all people born into the clan bearing the same surname as the chief of the clan and living on territory belonging to the chief. The Monguor clans (excepting the Shat'o groups) trace their presence in the Hsining district as far back as the period of the Yuän or Mongol dynasty (1260–1368). On the overthrow of this dynasty they submitted to the Ming dynasty. A fixed territory was then assigned to the chief of each clan. The Tibetans of the Hsining district were assigned territories in the same way at the same time. While the Tibetans were subject to the direct administration of the Chinese sub-prefecture officials, however, the Monguors, in spite of the fact that their territories formed enclaves within the sub-prefectures, were directly administered by their own clan chiefs under a peculiar kind of local autonomy.

MUSLIMS

563 The Hsining district is also an important Muslim stronghold. There are three Muslim groups, of which two still speak a Turkish dialect while one speaks Chinese. According to their own tradition, the Chinese-speaking Muslims are of Turkish origin, but while clinging to their religion they have adopted the Chinese language and many Chinese customs. From the Chinese point of view, however, they remain foreigners and barbarians, and there is cordial mutual dislike between Chinese and Chinese-speaking Muslims. In the Chinese *Annals* I have not been able to find any reference to the date of their earliest settlement in this region, although according to popular tradition they arrived either during

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175 put the rebels down by military force. He increased the harshness of the laws and exiled thousands of peasants to the barren region in order to glorify himself.[18]

This was the historical frame when the Monguor clans settled in the region of Hsining during the Yuan dynasty and when they submitted to the Ming dynasty as defenders of the marches in conjunction with the military colonists, their chiefs becoming Chinese officials with the title of T'u-ssu, in a country open to the forays and inroads of hostile tribes. In these conditions the Ming proposed to colonize the country.

SETTLEMENT AND DISTRIBUTION OF MONGUOR CLANS IN KANSU

•618 I use the term "clan" here to refer to a group sharing a common territory, a common surname, and a common chief. Monguor clans consist both of persons who recognize real or traditional kinship ties with the chief, and persons who do not recognize such ties but who have nevertheless adopted the surname of the chief and his kinsmen during the time that they were integrated into the group.

The current saying in the prefecture of Hsining and the sub-prefecture of Nienpei is that there are sixteen clans of Monguors. According to the *Annals* of Kansu, there are six clans in the prefecture of Hsining, and ten in the sub-prefecture of Nienpei.

618 175 162 1. The Ch'i clan, whose chief is recorded as being a true descendant of the imperial family of the Mongol dynasty.[19] Under this dynasty the Chief of the Ch'i clan was always an important official in Kansu, and on the fall of the dynasty the Ch'i T'u-ssu was the first of all the T'u-ssu to submit to the Ming dynasty in 1368, the year of its establishment.

At that time the Ch'i clan numbered eight hundred families of Monguor stock, divided into four sub-clans. In 1644, on the fall of the Ming dynasty, this clan submitted to the Manchu dynasty. It then numbered only seven hundred families, divided into eight sub-clans (*Annals* of Kansu, ch. 42, pp. 35*a–b*, 36*a*). The territory assigned to them was situated thirty-five miles south of Hsining and they lived in numerous villages.

2. The Ch'eng clan. The T'u-ssu of this clan is the only one of Chinese extraction, the founding ancestor having been born in Shanyang in the province of Chiangnan.[20] His father, who had been an official under the Mongol dynasty, joined the Chinese popular rising against the Mongols. The son, who followed in his father's footsteps, was rewarded with the title and office of T'u-ssu in 1374 and received 120 Monguor families as his subjects. The territory assigned to his clan is

[18] Homer H. Dubs, Wang Mang and his economic reforms, *T'oung-pao* 35: 230–231, Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1940.

[19] Ch'i is the Chinese clan name (*hsing*) adopted by the descendants of the Kiyut, a sept of the Borjigit, the clan of Chingis Khan.—O. L.

[20] Now the two provinces of Anhui and Kiangsu.—O. L.

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618 seventeen miles north of Hsining and includes seven villages (*Annals* of Kansu, ch. 42, pp. 26*b*, 37*a–b*).
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162 3. The Li clan. The T'u-ssu of this clan is of Shat'o stock. The founding ancestor, a prominent official in Hsining under the Mongol dynasty, submitted to the Ming dynasty in 1371. As a faithful official of the Ming dynasty, he was granted the title of Earl of Kaoyang (Kaoyang Po), the third rank of nobility, for military services rendered to the empire. One of his successors, the T'u-ssu Li Shih-hsien, died in 1427 fighting against Mongol invaders. In 1643 the T'u-ssu Li Hung-hsien, his wife, and 120 men of his family were killed when they refused to surrender to the Chinese peasant rebels whose insurrection opened the way to the Manchu conquest of China.

This clan numbered 963 families originally, living in forty-eight villages, ten miles south of Hsining (*Annals* of Kansu, ch. 42, pp. 38*b*, 39*a–b*).

4. The Na clan. The Na T'u-ssu is said to be of Shat'o stock. The founding ancestor submitted to the Ming in 1371. The clan numbered only 150 families of Shat'o (Monguors), living in 8 villages three miles south of Hsining (*Annals* of Kansu, ch. 42, pp. 39*b*, 40*a*).

5. The Wang clan. The Wang T'u-ssu, of Monguor stock, submitted to the Ming in 1371. This clan numbered 130 families of Monguor extraction and 18 Tibetan families, living ten miles west of Hsining scattered in eleven villages (*Annals* of Kansu, ch. 42, pp. 40*b*, 41*a–b*).

6. The Chi clan. Said to be of Shat'o extraction. The founding ancestor submitted in 1371. The clan included 90 families, living twenty miles west of Hsining (*Annals* of Kansu, ch. 42, p. 42). About 1875 the T'u-ssu was impeached by his subjects. The Chinese authorities erased his name from the list of T'u-ssu, and the clan passed under direct Chinese administration. The *Annals* do not record this fact.

In the sub-prefecture of Nienpei live ten clans:

1. The Ch'i clan. This clan is not the same as the clan of the same name in Hsining. Its chief is not a descendant of the Mongol imperial family of the Yuän, but is of Monguor stock. His ancestors were among the most influential frontier officials during the Mongol dynasty. The founding ancestor submitted to the Ming dynasty in 1371. This clan numbered 700 families of Monguor extraction. The chief lives one mile and a half north of the city of Nienpei. His subjects are scattered in many villages at varying distances from Nienpei (*Annals* of Kansu, ch. 42, pp. 44*b*, 45, 46).

2. The Li Nan-ko clan, of Shat'o stock. In the *Annals* the T'u-ssu is said to be a descendant of the Shat'o Li K'o-yung, prince of Chin, whose son founded the dynasty of the Hou T'ang. His son in turn, Li Wen, is recorded as the T'u-ssu of Hsining. This clan numbered 4,000 families of Shat'o stock, living in eight villages or valleys forty miles southeast of Nienpei. Huc

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618 175 162

and Gabet, Potanin, and Rockhill visited Sanch'uan where the mansion of the chief of the clan is located. The son of Li Nan-ko, Li Ying, was granted the title of Earl of Huining (Huining Po), the third rank of nobility, as a reward for military services (*Annals* of Kansu, ch. 42, pp. 47, 48). This and the following clan are independent of each other. Each has its own T'u-ssu, and both were recognized under the Manchu dynasty as separate units.

3. The Li Hua-nao clan, also of Shat'o extraction, comprising only 100 families in 1655. The T'u-ssu lives in the city of Nienpei, and his subjects are scattered in villages to the south (*Annals* of Kansu, ch. 42, p. 53). The founding ancestor of this line was made a T'u-ssu only in 1655, in the early years of the Manchu dynasty, and was an offshoot of the line of Li Nan-ko. For some reason not noted in the *Annals* he received from his father or his brother 100 out of the 4,000 families of the original clan and was made a T'u-ssu.

4. The Chao T'u-ssu clan, which submitted to the Ming dynasty in 1370. This clan is of Monguor extraction. Under the Mongol dynasty it moved to Nienpei, after having lived in Mingchou, and was settled fifteen miles north of the city. The clan numbered 120 families, scattered along the valley (*Annals* of Kansu, ch. 42, pp. 48–49). At an unknown date and for an unknown reason the T'u-ssu was erased from the list of the T'u-ssu and his subjects passed under ordinary Chinese administration. The *Annals* do not mention the fact.

5. The Ah clan, of Monguor stock, numbered 150 families, and lives seventeen miles east of Nienpei. The founding ancestor submitted to the Ming dynasty in 1371 (*Annals* of Kansu, ch. 42, pp. 49–50).

6. The Kan clan, of Monguor stock, numbered 300 families. The founding ancestor submitted to the Ming dynasty in 1371. The clan is settled 75 miles southeast of Nienpei in the valley of Mo Tou (*Annals* of Kansu, ch. 42, pp. 51*b*–52).

7. The Chou clan, of Monguor stock, numbered only 62 families. It adjoins the Kan clan, living seventy-five miles southeast of Nienpei. The founding ancestor submitted to the Ming dynasty in 1371 (*Annals* of Kansu, ch. 42, pp. 51*b*, 52).

8. The Yeh clan, a small clan of 70 Muslim families of Turkish stock originating from Sinkiang. The Chinese called them Ch'ant'ou or Turbaned Heads. (See above, p. 34.) They settled in the country under the Mongol dynasty. As a military commander the founding ancestor submitted to the Ming dynasty in 1371, together with the other T'u-ssu. The T'u-ssu of this line were eager defenders of the Ming frontier; two of them died in battle, one in 1570, one in 1638. They were settled in the Mila valley forty miles southeast of Nienpei (*Annals* of Kansu, ch. 42, pp. 52, 53). About 1890 the name of the T'u-ssu was erased from the list of T'u-ssu and his subjects became ordinary Chinese subjects. The fact is not mentioned in the *Annals*.

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9. The Hsin clan, of Monguor stock, comprised 100 families, settled with the Kan seventy-five miles southeast of Nienpei. The founding ancestor submitted to the Ming dynasty in 1371 (*Annals* of Kansu, ch. 42, p. 54). The name of the T'u-ssu was later erased from the list of T'u-ssu.

10. The La clan, a small group of Monguor stock. The number of families is not recorded. The founding ancestor submitted to the Ming dynasty in 1371 and was settled seventy-five miles southeast of Nienpei, near the Kan clan (*Annals* of Kansu, ch. 42, p. 54).

These are the sixteen groups recorded in the *Annals* of Kansu, ch. 42, and in the *Annals* of Hsining, ch. 24. They were all living in the country under the Mongol dynasty, and submitted to the Ming. The Ch'eng and Chi groups, in the prefecture of Hsining, and the Chao, Yeh, and Hsin groups, in the sub-prefecture of Nienpei, have now "become Chinese," and their chiefs have been erased from the lists of the T'u-ssu.

The chiefs of these Shat'o and Monguor groups still bore Mongol names when they submitted to the Ming. After having held the office of T'u-ssu for two or three generations, the chiefs adopted Chinese surnames and each group then adopted the Chinese surname of its chief.

During the Ming and Manchu dynasties, and especially after 1723, single Tibetan families or small Tibetan groups were enrolled in nearly all the groups. Still later, Chinese families were accepted in the same way; but the Chinese did not adopt the surname of the chief of the group.

The foregoing data show that the habitat of the Monguors is not limited to the district of Hsining. In addition, it may be noted that the mansion of Lu T'u-ssu, of Monguor extraction, is located at Liench'eng, forty-five miles west of the sub-prefecture of P'ingfan. This large group call themselves Monguor and the Chinese call them T'u-jen; they are neighbors of the Monguors of Nienpei. In this one group there are no less than seven T'u-ssu, all claiming descent from the imperial family of the founder of the Mongol dynasty. The T'u-ssu of Liench'eng is the head of the whole group. He alone is regarded as the ruler of the subject people and possessor of the territory assigned to them by the Ming dynasty. The other six T'u-ssu hold only the title, without the powers of chieftainship. In time of war they are bound to obey the order of the senior T'u-ssu; and for revenue each of them is allowed to collect land taxes from a fixed number of villages.

The seven T'u-ssu of this group represent seven lines of descent from either the brothers or the sons of the prince of Nanting (the *Annals* of Kansu, ch. 50, pp. 55–57, incorrectly name him prince of Wu-ting). His ancestor was Kolgan, son of Chingis Khan by his favorite beauty, Kulan.[21] The prince who was living in the country at the end of the Mongol dynasty submitted

[21] The family chronicles of this clan, which I am preparing for publication, are referred to above. [P. 32-b]

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769 veneration of the ancestors at the graveyard, the festival, and the meeting of the clan. I shall note here only the facts related to the structure of the clan as manifested in the solemn worship. I shall deal later with the other phases.

In the avenue leading straight from the entrance of the graveyard to the imposing mound of the ancestor the worshippers, holding incense sticks in their hands, stood erect. They were divided into two distinct groups, standing apart but both facing the mound. The offering disposed on a table before the mound included a hog, a pork pie, rolls of steamed bread, dried grapes, sugar, and pears.

As chief of the clan the T'u-ssu stood in front of both groups and performed the libations, the burning of paper, and the offering of the sacrifices.

The first of the two groups mentioned above was disposed in six rows, each of which performed in succession the veneration of the ancestor by prostration. Then the members of the first row, in a group, turned and honored, by bowing, the members of the five other rows. Those of the second row, after having honored the members of the first row by prostrating themselves, turned and honored the members of the next four rows with a simple bow, and so on. The pork pie and the rolls, sacrifices for the ancestor, were then divided among the members of the six rows, who by eating some of the food partook at the graveyard in a sacrificial meal in communion with the ancestor. Later a piece of pork from the hog was offered to each of the families of members of the six rows.

After this sacrificial meal, the large second group approached the mound, and prostrated themselves in a group (not in separate rows), holding incense sticks in their joined hands, to venerate the ancestor. Then, prostrating themselves again in a group, they honored the members of the first group. They did not partake of the sacrificial meal. This concluded the rites at the graveyard.

The members of the first group only then went to the courtyard of Ch'i Sen-k'o (Ch'i the lion),[1] a wealthy Monguor, in order to honor the clan register of genealogy according to regular ritual and to bring it up to date by entering the names of members deceased since the last diet.

769 These rites reveal the internal structure and social organization of the Monguor clan.

●618 The T'u-ssu, as recognized chief of the clan, officiated at the sacrifice, acting in front of the whole clan and in its name.

All members of the clan, as bearers of the same surname, claim descent from a common ancestor, and therefore they assemble at the grave mound of this common ancestor to venerate him collectively.

The general assembly is, however, divided into two

[1] From Monguor *senggi*, Mongol *senge*, Tibetan *senge*, "lion."

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groups, and the differences between these groups demand analysis.

1. The members of the first group are disposed in six rows which venerate the ancestor in succession and in the same way, but each row honors the others in different ways. The first row honors the five others with a simple bow. The second row honors the first row by prostration, but the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth rows by bowing only. The third row honors the first and second rows by prostration, but the fourth, fifth, and sixth rows only by bowing, and so on down.

2. All the members of the large second group venerate the ancestor by prostration, not in rows of precedence but as a uniform group. They honor the members of the six rows of the first group by the same rite of prostration, and this they also do collectively and simultaneously.

3. The members of the first group, the six rows, partake of the sacrificial meal offered to the ancestor; the members of the second group are excluded from this rite.

4. The members of the first group honor the genealogical register in the presence of the T'u-ssu, and the names of their deceased are carefully inscribed in this register according to a special ritual. The members of the second group are not allowed to honor the register and the names of their deceased are debarred from the precious book.

I was delayed in arriving at a logical analysis of these differences by the existence of a mistaken "folk" concept of the structure of the Monguor clan. According to this popular and universally accepted tradition, all members of the clan bear the same surname, which is the same as that of their chief, and therefore all are assumed to be the descendants of a common ancestor. Moreover, the pattern of actual behavior follows this tradition. In conformity with the principle of patrilineal exogamy, the boys of the clan are not allowed to marry girls of their own clan. In addition, all members of the clan venerate the same founding ancestor, as described above.

Nevertheless the existence of two groups, ritually differentiated from each other, leads inevitably to the conclusion that in each clan the members of the first are true descendants of a common ancestor, while those of the second group are commoners, descendants of other ancestors, who have been assimilated to clan status, though incompletely and at a subordinate level.

The six rows of "true" clan members represent six different generations of descent from the founding ancestor, through his sons.[2] Therefore the members of the senior generation worship the ancestor first, followed by the cadet generations in descending order. Similarly each cadet generation, from second to fifth,

[2] This does *not* mean that a man in the youngest generation had his own father, grandfather, etc., up to the fifth ascending generation still living. It means simply that owing to wide age spreads within any generation, it was ultimately possible to have assembled a group of kinsmen in which six different generations were represented.

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769 accords to its seniors a prostration, but to its juniors only a simple bow.

•618 Collectively, the six lines of true genealogical descent form an elite. The "assimilated" commoners are admitted to the general rites and bear the clan name, but are excluded from the inner rites according to the principle that there cannot be actual participation in the veneration of other people's ancestors. Hence also their exclusion from the genealogical register.

The secondary status of the commoners is shown not only by their exclusion from the register and the sacrificial meal in communion with the ancestor, but by their collective prostration before the elite group. The ranking by seniority of generations, so important for the elite group, does not concern them, since those in the elite group are not in fact their kinsmen but simply represent, in a collective, undifferentiated way, the "lords" or descendants of the noble ancestor to whom their own ancestors became subject long ago.

The strongest confirmation, however, of the fact that the commoners are assimilated members of the clan and not true descendants of the clan ancestor is to be found in the fact that their dead are not entered in the genealogical record of the clan and they are not admitted to the rite of honoring the genealogical record. This exclusion would not be possible if they had any real claim to descent from the clan ancestor because in the larger Oriental cultural complex of which they are a marginal society to be debarred from the family register is the most shameful dishonor. Other facts also support the conclusion that commoners do in reality have their own line or lines of descent. They have their own cemeteries. In these cemeteries they carry out their own ceremonies of ancestral veneration, including the sacrificial meal of "communion." There is no indication that these ancestors of the commoners are regarded as offshoots from the line of the noble elite of the clan. Some of the wealthier commoners even have their own genealogical registers; but among all the seventeen Monguor groups, I never heard of a common ancestor of the entire commoner group. This absence of a claim to a common ancestor of the subject group suggests that the subject groups derive originally not from a single subject clan but from a number of subject clans, each with its own ancestor.

Analyses of the kind made above are never made by the Monguors themselves. When asked why all members of the clan, including the subject commoners, bear the same surname as the chief, the stock reply is simply that this has always been customary among them, and really it was so of old.[3]

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[3] B. Y. Vladimirtsov, in his *Régime social des Mongols*, translated by M. Carsow, 88, Paris, Adrien-Maisonneuve. 1948 (the original Russian edition was published in Leningrad, Academy of Sciences, 1934), writes that *unagan bogol* (hereditary vassals), and even "simple" *bogol* (slaves) were allowed to keep the memory of their "bones" and their clans, but "migrated in camps bear-

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618 582 In a clan structure grouped under a single clan name, the principle of exogamy is in theory supposed to be strict, but the practice varies somewhat from the theory, again indicating that the nominal clan includes a true genealogical clan together with families that have been assimilated to the clan. In a Monguor clan it is, for example, permitted for Monguor men to marry girls of families of known Chinese or Tibetan origin who have enrolled in the clan. I have also been told that among some groups of the commoners in the Li and Lu clans, Monguor boys marry Monguor girls of the same clan. They claim that in permitting such marriages they follow the practice of the Chinese, who allow marriages between families bearing the same surname (especially if it is one of the very common surnames), if the two clans are considered to be descended in fact from different original ancestors. Exogamy is, however, strictly observed among the noble or elite families who do claim true genealogical descent from a common ancestor; but once in a while a poor noble marries the daughter of a commoner of his clan.

If we may accept it as proved that the commoners are of different descent from the nobles, we are still faced with the problem of determining the real origin of the commoners. The Monguors, when asked about the difference between nobles and commoners, say that "things have always been that way." It is not surprising to find among the nobles, however, vestiges of a tradition explaining how they acquired their subject commoners. I have been told by no less than three T'u-ssu—the Ch'i, Li, and Ah—that the commoners are descendants of tribes which had been conquered by the ancestors of the T'u-ssu.

PROCESS OF CLAN FORMATION AT THE TIME OF CHINGIS KHAN

618 175 For a comparison we may turn to the record of what is known about the way that Chingis Khan allocated territories and subjects to his sons, brothers, and leading generals. Vladimirtsov has described how Chingis assigned territories to the nobility that he created as a result of his conquests, and how he gave them sometimes whole tribes and sometimes fragments of tribes to live in these territories and be ruled by them.[4] The result was a social structure in which—as we see in miniature in the surviving Monguor society—the nobility were quite clear about their claims of descent, either from the imperial family or from other noble "founding ancestors," while the subject population, of diverse origin, were less clear about their genealogies but closely associated with their rulers in a manner that remained partly tribal but had become partly feudal. Under this system, there was a protocol which nominally required each ruling prince or noble to furnish to his sovereign a

ing the name of their suzerain clan, under the orders of the latter."

[4] Vladimirtsov, *op. cit.*, 124, 125, 127. [p. 396]

1; Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1954 AE9 Monguor AE9

definite number of troops, whenever required, according to the size of his territory and the numbers of the population. Such appanages could be under the rule not only of families descended from the imperial clan, but of families whose "founding ancestors" were antrustions.[5] The origin and social condition of the commoners among the Monguor clans are clearly to be explained in this manner.

It appears probable that the Monguor groups began to form in this way as early as the rule of the Yuan or Mongol dynasty. At the very beginning of the Ming dynasty we find the chiefs of all the Monguor groups submitting to Chinese rule, but we do not find any record of groups of the Monguor type being actually created by the Ming emperors. We may therefore suppose that generally speaking the Monguor commoners of today are the descendants of families who were already subject commoners in the Mongol period before the Ming dynasty, with the later addition of a number of families of Chinese and Tibetan origin. As to the manner in which such later additions could be made, I have already mentioned the fact that the Lu T'u-ssu received from the Manchu emperor thirteen Tibetan villages, numbering 2,365 persons to be his commoners and subjects, as a reward for military services rendered during the historical revolt of 1723 (*Annals* of Kansu, ch. 42, p. 87).

The processes of clan formation thus resulted in the evolution of four kinds of clan chiefs:

1. Chiefs who, with their related nobles, claimed descent from the Mongol imperial family of the Yuan;

2. Commoners who became chiefs of clans and founded their own noble families;

3. Antrustions, individual warriors, who became chiefs of clans and founded their own noble families;

4. Chiefs of clans who submitted voluntarily to the Yuan dynasty with their nobles and commoners.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHIEFS AND NOBLES IN THE MONGUOR CLANS

Among the seventeen Monguor clans, two are recorded in the *Annals* of Kansu as being descended from the imperial family of the Yuan dynasty: the Ch'i clan (*Annals* of Kansu, ch. 42, p. 35) and the Lu clan (*Annals* of Kansu, ch. 42, p. 55). The family chronicles of the Lu clan, as already mentioned, are in my possession and I am planning to edit and publish them.

[5] This term, taken from early European feudalism, is used in the French translation of Vladimirtsov for the Russian term *druzhinnik* which Vladimirtsov uses to translate the Mongol term *nukur*, literally "friend." In the simplest terms, a *nukur* was a free warrior who voluntarily attached himself to the leader of a war-band, establishing a relationship of personal loyalty transcending all clan and other obligations. Some of the greatest commanders who served Chingis Khan began as *nukur*. Mongol *nukur*, Russian *drug*, "friend," whence *druzhinnik*, and Greek ξένος, "guest-friend," all have a root meaning of "other," "foreign" (to my own clan); institutionally they share with Latin *comes*, whence the title "count," the meaning of an association formed personally, not by circumstance of birth.—O. L.

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175 624 being based on the agnatic principle, the oldest son inherits the leadership of the clan, after the death of his father.

By the beginning of the present century (1911-1922), however, the T'u-ssu was no longer living in one group with his noble kinsmen; he was not the provider of all their needs, including food and clothing; he and his nobles no longer constituted a large family; and T'u-ssu and nobles were no longer living entirely at the expense of the commoners.

The nobles were by this time living in separate and distinct families, each forming an independent economic unit. Consequently some were poor and some rich. In this economic aspect, there was no longer a distinction between nobles and commoners. Noble families bought and sold land, cattle, and grain to each other and to commoners in exactly the same way, and the rise or fall of a family's fortunes depended on the industry or laziness, the good or bad fortune, of its members.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE NOBLE HOUSES

175 618 In the inheritance of wealth among nobles, however, there is a peculiar institution to be considered. In each clan the nobles are divided into branches, called "houses." In some clans there are three houses, in others four or five; in the Li clan there are thirteen. Each noble family knows the house to which it belongs. In each clan the first branch is called "the great House," the second is called the second House, and so on. Each house comprises the descendants of one of the sons of the founding ancestor of the clan who was appointed T'u-ssu at or soon after the founding of the Ming dynasty in 1368. During his life, the wealth, grain, cattle, cultivated land, and money of the founding ancestor were divided among his sons. If there were three sons, the eldest by right of being the first born succeeded his father as T'u-ssu and chief of the clan; but the property of the founding ancestor was divided in three parts. The new T'u-ssu and his two brothers each inherited one part, with only the distinction that the eldest son received a somewhat larger portion of fields and cattle. The privilege of a large portion was passed on to the eldest son in each succeeding generation.[10]

The number of houses established according to the number of the sons of the founding ancestor has continued ever since as a genealogical principle. Nobles identify each other by houses, saying "I belong to" or "he belongs to the third House." In principle, also, the patrimony of each house was permanently established at this first division. In practice, however, if the descendants of either the great House or one of the junior houses

[10] Vladimirtsov, *op. cit.*, 224, "the Mongol feudal seigneur . . . usually received his fief by inheritance and transmitted it to his son. Mongol seigneurs apportioned inheritances to their sons during their own lifetime, reserving the essential part of the heritage to the eldest son, after their death." The old custom of preserving the principal fief of the father for the youngest son had disappeared by the time of the Yuan dynasty.

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618 175 grew numerous they could subdivide the patrimony; the new subdivisions would then continue as independent households or families responsible to each other in vicissitudes of wealth or poverty.

In Monguor society since the Ming, only the T'u-ssu personally came to be regarded as the ruler and "possessor" of the commoners. None of the houses disposed of commoners as subjects. It is quite clear, however, that in former times among the nomads each group of nobles was a real possessor of subjects. Subjects and territory were regarded as assigned to the clan by the emperor and were understood to belong to the whole clan and not to the chief alone. Accordingly, when a noble was at odds with the clan, he could leave it, taking with him his portion of the clan's subjects, and join another clan, or found a new clan. In this way it often happened that when clans were at war with each other, there would be subgroups in each of them that belonged to the same "bone," although they were engaged in killing each other.[11]

The idea of the collective "ownership," by the blood-related noble families, of the subject commoners persists more strongly under a nomad economy, for obvious reasons, than it does under an agricultural economy, but memories of it persist among nomads who have become farmers. This concept seems to have prevailed among the Shat'o, who before the Ming dynasty were already divided into two groups, one of 4,000 families and one of 963 families. The chiefs of each of these groups were made T'u-ssu. Later, at the end of the Ming dynasty, the T'u-ssu Li Hua-lung of the line of Li Nan-ko died without issue and troubles broke out over the succession. The Manchu empire appointed a claimant named Li T'ien-yu as T'u-ssu, but allowed the troublesome pretender Li Hua-nao to take 100 families from the 4,000-family group, and granted him a separate title of T'u-ssu (*Annals* of Hsining, ch. 24, p. 8).

Trouble among the noble families of the Lu clan seems also to have been the reason why six members of this clan were created T'u-ssu (*Annals* of Kansu, ch. 52, pp. 58–59). The craving for subjects, based on the old custom, seems to have been the cause of these troubles, although the *Annals* gloss over the matter, as is often done in Chinese chronicles to "save face," by allowing it to be understood that each of the six new T'u-ssu had deserved his appointment through meritorious service on the Tibetan frontier.

624 175 The same lingering tradition that the nobles had or ought to have a right to dispose of a number of subjects may account for the fact that, in lieu of a division of subject commoners among the sons of a founding ancestor, each of the houses was assigned the land tax revenue of a fixed number of villages of commoners. This meant that when the patrimony of the founding ancestor was divided, the land taxes of the villages followed the division of the inheritance. Here again the

[11] Vladimirtsov, *op. cit.*, 79.

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taxes are collected from Chinese who graze their herds on the clan territory. When the T'u-ssu sitting in judgment settles a quarrel, he collects a payment. He also expects gifts in cash when he makes his triennial visit to the villages and on the occasion of funerals and marriages.

As opposed to these sources of personal revenue, the T'u-ssu has very few administrative expenses because most administration is carried on through the obligatory services of clan members. The few Chinese secretaries who are employed receive instead of salary the allocation of fields which they are allowed to farm without paying land taxes. Since there are no schools, there is no budget for education, nor is there any expenditure for building roads or bridges or for the upkeep of administrative buildings because all such work is done through the levying of obligatory labor. Monguor carpenters, bricklayers, and other artisans, in addition to unskilled labor, being available through the institution of obligatory labor services (corvée). Since each village has to provide a fixed number of soldiers, with their full equipment; uniforms, weapons, horses, tents, food, etc., there is no budget for military expenses.

THE CHIEF OF THE CLAN

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The description of the composition of the clan that has been given in the preceding pages raises by implication the problem of the origin and evolution of the clan chief.

ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF THE CLAN CHIEF INSTITUTION

The clan chief is *not an essential element* of the clan. Vladimirtsov,[12] drawing on the Mongol *Secret History* and other chronicle material, demonstrates that, in periods when the pastoral tribes of Mongolia were not unified in large groups under powerful clans, it was quite common to find clans without a regular hereditary aristocracy, led simply by self-constituted chiefs who were heads of families. By way of comparison, it may be noted that most of the small Tibetan tribes of the Hsining region have no aristocracy of chiefs, but are ruled by a sort of council of the heads of families.

The historical and comparative material makes it clear that in clan societies without hereditary chiefs leaders may be designated temporarily and for specific purposes, such as the organization of community hunting drives, raids on other tribes, or defense against raiders. Leadership in such cases may be influenced by, but not solely determined by, seniority in the clan. It may also be influenced by the personal characteristics of resourcefulness or aggressiveness in the man who becomes a leader, or by the number of his relatives and friends and the degree to which they are respected in the community, and, therefore, it may be said that such leadership simultaneously carries a tinge of usurpation by the

[12] *Op. cit.*, 93.

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individual and a tinge of election or delegation by those whom he leads. To the extent that this kind of leadership is not a well-defined institution, it is not surprising to find that the authority of the leader can be contested and that those who do not accept his leadership may leave the clan either to join other clans or to found a new clan.

There is an inherent tendency for such temporary leadership to become institutionalized and hereditary when a leader of commanding personality succeeds in providing his clan with booty and vassals, and lives long enough to prepare the way for a son to succeed him. Permanent and hereditary chiefs may, however, also be imposed by a conquerer. In the case of the Monguors, the new Mongol empire that resulted from the Mongol conquests was powerful enough to assign fixed territories to the Monguor clans and to designate hereditary ruling chiefs, so that chieftanship had already become hereditary and aristocratic. This view is supported by the fact that when the Mongol Empire was overthrown and the Ming dynasty established in 1368, there were no less than seventeen chiefs of Monguor and Shat'o clans who were able to offer their allegiance to the Ming emperor as chiefs whose authority, territory, and subject following were locally recognized.

As the institution of hereditary chief was established or reestablished under the Ming, with the specific title of T'u-ssu, it is clear that it had conserved its social as well as its political and military characteristics, and so in the status and functions of the chief of a clan a number of aspects are to be discerned.

By virtue of his birth in the clan, the clan chief presides over the cult aspects of religion in the clan. He is the chief figure in ceremonies venerating the ancestors; he is the guardian of the genealogical register; he also heads the cult of the guardian deity of the clan, whose temple is maintained in his mansion. He is also the ruler of his clan according to the laws of succession recognized within the clan, and at the same time under the Ming dynasty, the Manchu dynasty and the Chinese Republic, he was, by appointment of the overlord state, the ruler of both the clan and its territory. In all these capacities it was his duty to act as chief of the nobles and lord of the commoners, to preside over the meetings of elders, to adjudicate quarrels, to protect his subjects against infringements on their rights and privileges, and to command the armed forces of the clan in time of war.

RULES OF SUCCESSION OF THE CLAN CHIEF

In the rules of succession to the position of chief, although the office of chief of a clan is not open to competition, there are in fact elements of heredity, of choice or selection, of the consent of the governed, and of appointment by the overlord. A man does not become chief because he has held previous high office, because he has a commanding personality, or because he is a popular leader. Nor can he usurp the leadership

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618 624 because he is backed by a group of friends. He succeeds to office according to certain definite customs of the clan. The chief must belong genealogically to the nobles who are descendants of the "founding ancestor." When a T'u-ssu dies, the heads of all the noble families, together with the most prominent heads of families among the commoners, convene to choose a successor. It may seem anomalous that commoners should take part in the choosing of a new chief. The way in which the lower status of commoners in the ceremonial veneration of the clan ancestor is emphasized has already been described. There is a social inequality between commoners and nobles that can never be completely eliminated. Nevertheless, in the last years of the history of the old Monguor society the differences between nobles and commoners had in many ways practically ceased to exist. The heads of prominent commoner families took part in all meetings at which clan affairs were discussed. In the Monguor clans, there were commoners who were wealthier, more learned, more honored in the community, and more proficient in administrative matters than many of the nobles. It even occurred that when there were quarrels among the nobles, distinguished and respected commoners were called in to mediate. It may be, therefore, either that the participation of commoners in the choice of the new chief represents no more than a condescension on the part of the nobles, for the sake of mere civility, or that there is a lingering tradition from the ancient times of tribal history that the choice of the ruling part of the tribe (now the Monguor clan) must be ratified by the consent of the governed part of the tribe.[12]

Examination of the lists of the genealogies of all the Monguor clans as they are recorded in the *Annals* of the Prefecture of Hsining suggests the conclusion that the first son of the first wife of the T'u-ssu regularly succeeded to the office of his father. If the senior son died before his father but left a living son, then this son was entitled to the succession even if he were only an adopted son. In case the senior son died before his father and left no male issue, however, the next senior brother of the T'u-ssu, or that brother's son, was entitled to the succession. In the family chronicles of the Lu clan I have found one exception to this rule, and only one, a case in which the first son of the first wife did not succeed, the succession going instead to the brother next senior to him. I shall deal with this instance in the study of the genealogy of this clan which I am preparing for publication.

618 578 611 When a T'u-ssu dies leaving no sons, trouble usually breaks out in the clan because each of the surviving brothers of the T'u-ssu is eager to secure the succession either for himself or for his own eldest son. In such cases, if one of the contending brothers has more influence in the community than the others, or is richer or more popular with the clan, he succeeds in getting his

[12] Vladimirtsov, *op. cit.*, 100. [p. 44a]

618 578 611 eldest son chosen and appointed. In one such case, in the clan of the Na T'u-ssu, four T'u-ssu of other clans were invited in to arbitrate, and after discussions which lasted many days the son of a rich man, the third brother of the T'u-ssu who had just died, was agreed on and appointed by the clan.

175 618 578 611 According to the *Annals* of Hsining (ch. 24, p. 8) the last T'u-ssu of the Ming period in the clan of Li, of the line founded by Li Nan-ko, was a man named Li Hua-lung, who died without issue. Li T'ien-yu, the first cousin of Li Hua-lung who had just died, belonging to the same generation in order of descent from the clan ancestor, and of the same house, laid claim to the succession. In order to put an end to trouble within the family, one hundred families of commoners out of the four thousand belonging to the T'u-ssu were given to the contending claimant Li Hua-nao, and consenting to a petition from the nobles who were his relatives in the clan, the Manchu Emperor bestowed on him the title of T'u-ssu. Thus Li Hua-nao became the "founding ancestor" of a new clan, with one hundred families of commoners as subjects.

618 Thus while the historical material seems to show that in most cases the choice and appointment of a new chief of the clan are a mere formality, there are also instances that seem to prove that the rule of succession is not always clear-cut, especially when the T'u-ssu dies without male issue. In any case, a daughter never succeeds because the clans are built on a strictly patrilineal family system with male chieftaincy. In this respect, as will be seen below in the chapter dealing with family organization, the rules of ordinary family succession tally with those that govern the succession of the chief of the clan, and the head of the family presides over religious cult practices within the family as the chief presides within the clan. [562] [428]

In case the succeeding son is still a minor, however, his mother is appointed regent by the sovereign state, formerly the Empire and later the Republic. This custom seems to prove that the senior son, even if still a minor, has a specific claim to succeed his father.

There is a discrepancy between the Monguor rule of succession as far as it can be checked by historical documents and an ancient Mongol custom that prevailed up to the time of Chingis Khan, under which the eldest son received his portion of the inheritance while his parents were still living and moved away to live as the head of his own family; the next son, in due course, similarly left the parental camp, and finally the youngest son was left to care for his parents in their old age and to receive the residual inheritance. Under this custom, the original tent, camp, and herds remained with the youngest son, while the most distant related camp was that of his eldest brother, who had moved away first and farthest. Barthold, commenting on this custom, notes that Chingis Khan, during his lifetime, endowed his sons and other relations with appanages, and that Juchi,

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618 as the eldest son, received the first and most distant appanage.[14] Lattimore, making a generalized comment on the nomadic Mongol society, writes as follows:

> There is a very ancient concept of authority inherent in the life of a people whose mobile property in livestock makes it easy for them to move from one place to another. According to this concept, a "tribe" consists of an indefinite number of "unnoble" families ruled by a hereditary "noble" family. The "chief," who became stabilized as a "prince" when the Manchus ruled Mongolia by remote control, was not necessarily the eldest son of the previous chief. When a chief died his successor was chosen from a "panel," which included not only his own sons but the sons of his brothers. The brothers, uncles and male first cousins of the late chief [on the father's side] formed a clan council of "yesterday's generations" of the hereditary noble family. This clan council chose the new chief from the panel of sons and nephews, which represented "today's generation." This new chief had to be accepted by the tribe. If he were not satisfactory the tribe might demur, either at once or later. The clan council might then recall the chief, replacing him by one of his brothers, one of his male first cousins on the father's side or one of his own sons or nephews in the male line. All this rested on a still more basic sanction: if the chief did not suit the tribe, the tribe or part of the tribe might desert him. They might either run away and join some tribe which had a better chief, or more rarely some new leader might, by proving his efficiency, make himself a new chief and so found a new tribe with a new, hereditary noble family. In short, a chief had ultimately to justify himself by his ability to lead his tribe, as well as by his hereditary claims. The more anxious and dangerous the times the more pressing the demand that he meet the needs of the people.[15]

INSTALLATION OF THE CLAN CHIEF

796 The following account of the installation of the chief
618 of a clan is mostly from information given to me by the T'u-ssu of the Ch'i clan of Nienpei, with whom and with whose family I was on terms of intimate friendship.

An auspicious day is chosen, usually by a lama. The ceremonies begin with a banquet, at which the principal guest is the senior maternal uncle of the chief who is about to be installed. According to the Monguor saying, the brothers of the mother are the "masters of the bones" of the children of their sister. In ordinary life, they are the most honored guests when her children are married, and when her children die they cannot be buried without the permission of a maternal uncle; similarly at this most important moment in the life of a new chief, it is the maternal uncles who hold the place of honor among the guests.

To the feast are invited the heads of the noble families, the most prominent of the non-nobles, the officials of the T'u-ssu administration, and the local officials of the Monguor villages. An old nobleman makes a speech in which he says that on this day the entire clan recognizes its new chief, whom he mentions by name, as chief of

[14] W. Barthold, *Turkestan down to the Mongol invasion*, trans. and ed. by H. A. R. Gibb, 392, London, Luzac, 1928.

[15] Owen Lattimore, *Mongol journeys*, 317, New York, Doubleday, 1941.

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the clan. The whole clan, he says, is happy to express its obedience and its willingness to help and serve him; the clan hopes that he may be as glorious a chief as his ancestors of old in defending the clan and its component families.

The new-clan chief first kneels down and bows nine times to his maternal uncle; then the noble members of the clan of generations senior to that of the new chief stand in line before him, salute him reverently three times, and join hands. The new chief, at the command of the master of ceremonies, then kneels down and bows nine times to them, touching the earth with his forehead at each bow.

The noble clan members who are of the same generation as the new chief then line up, kneel down, and (again at the command of the master of ceremonies) reverently bow their heads nine times to the earth before their new chief, after which the new chief acknowledges their homage by greeting them in the same way. Finally, the members of generations younger than that of the new chief perform the ceremony, but this time the new chief makes acknowledgment only by a standing bow, not by kneeling and bowing his head to the earth. Finally the whole group of commoners and officials kneel down and bow nine times to the bowing T'u-ssu. The whole group then goes to the hall of the ancestors, where paper and incense are burned by the newly appointed chief. Those present bow their heads reverently while standing in rows according to their rank and generation, in time with the command of the master of ceremonies. The ancestors are thus supposed to have received the announcement of the appointment of the new chief. Then all go to the temple of the guardian deity of the clan.

As I shall discuss the importance of the maternal uncle in Monguor society in a later chapter, I shall here make only a brief comment on the fact that at the significant moment when, in a society organized on a patrilineal family system, the eldest son of the first wife succeeds to office as the chief of the clan, it is his maternal uncle who has the place of honor. The occasion being one in which ancient customs are likely to be preserved, we are entitled to assume that the importance of the maternal uncle goes very far back in the history of Monguor society.

THE CLAN CHIEF BECOMES A CHINESE OFFICIAL

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The chief of the clan must next be considered in his function as T'u-ssu, an office that he holds by the appointment of the sovereign state of which the Monguor clans are quasi-feudal frontier dependents. Under the Mongol Empire, the Monguors were entitled to consider themselves kinsmen of the Mongol rulers of China. When the Mongol Empire fell and the Chinese Ming dynasty was established, the Monguor chiefs who submitted to it did so as the result of a decision of supreme importance; by adhering to the Ming dynasty they renounced the alternative of retreating into Inner Asia

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with other Mongol tribes, denounced in effect their ties of tribal loyalty to other Mongols, and declared their willingness to serve as feudal subordinates guarding the Chinese frontier against the inroads of Mongols, Tibetans, or other "outer barbarians." When the Ming dynasty invested them with the title of T'u-ssu, they ceased to be simple chiefs of clans and became Chinese officials whose rights over their hereditary subjects were modified by their duty to the Chinese emperor.

THE T'U-SSU INSTITUTION

The institution of T'u-ssu or "local chief" was one that had been developed for the special purpose of administering non-Chinese tribal groups on the frontier of the Empire. The first historical record of an institution comparable to that of T'u-ssu is to be found in the institution of the Chimichou, under the T'ang dynasty (618–906). Under this institution the T'ang dynasty organized "barbarian" subject tribes in "circumscriptions" ruled by hereditary native chiefs who received investiture from the emperor.[16] The institution of T'u-ssu was known under the Yuan or Mongol dynasty, was reorganized and given its definite form under the Ming dynasty, and was continued under the Manchu dynasty. It survived under the Chinese Republic.

As an institution, the T'u-ssu system may be described as a method of allowing marginal, non-Chinese peoples, attached to but not yet absorbed into the body of Chinese society, to continue to live according to their own customs, but under a form of administration adapted to, and forming an extension of, that of China as a whole. Hence the dual function of the T'u-ssu as "native chief" and as Chinese official.

CHOICE OF CLAN CHIEF RATIFIED BY EMPEROR

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The choosing of a new chief by the clan itself has already been described. This choice had then to be ratified. This was done through the administrative office of the T'u-ssu, acting as a bureaucratic office and not as the personal office of the T'u-ssu, which sent an official notice of the death of the previous T'u-ssu to the governor of the Province, to be forwarded to the capital at Peking, giving the day, hour, and circumstances of the death of the T'u-ssu. At the same time a petition was sent, through the same channels, imploring the emperor to appoint to the office of T'u-ssu the man whom the clan had selected as its new chief. In the event that the new chief of the clan was a minor, the petition requested that his mother be appointed regent. The emperor, granting the petition, then appointed the new clan chief to the office of T'u-ssu (or, if the son were a minor, appointed his mother as regent). The mother's regency ended when the son married or when he reached the age

[16] P. Pelliot, *Bulletin de l'école Française d'extrême Orient*, 1125, 1904. Leng Shun-Sheng, T'u-ssu chi tu, in *Frontier affairs* (*Pien cheng Kunglün*) 3 (2): 11–12, 1944.

425 they want us to sign contracts, have them registered, and pay taxes. In the good old days, as our tradition goes, all these formalities did not exist; when Monguors wanted to bring into cultivation some non-cultivated land in the clan territory, they took possession of it, and paid the regular taxes according to average. When they "passed" the land to some other member of the clan, they fixed the sum to be paid by mutual agreement. No contract was signed. Instead, the outlines of the field were drawn on a plank; the plank was sawn in two pieces, and each took half of it. Now there are too many astute Chinese enrolled in the clan. We Monguors and the T'u-ssu are not so unsophisticated as before, and every day there are more and more formalities.

425 618 This tradition about taking possession of land within the territory of the clan according to the personal needs of the subject, and naturally without prejudice to the interests of others, is instructive and believable. In the Hsifan (Tibetan) tribe of Sumdoo, near the monastery of Erhkulung, the same procedure still prevailed in 1911–1921. There, every member of the clan was free to bring into cultivation non-cultivated land, and to build a house anywhere in the territory of the clan. The man who did so was bound to notify his taking possession of the soil by offering to the chief of the tribe a quarter of a brick of tea and two packets of Chinese vermicelli; no other formalities or expenses. This tribe was still practising far more stock-breeding than agriculture, and was probably very much like the Monguors at the time when they were making the transition from cattle-breeding to farming. Among them, if a man wanted to make money by selling land that he had improved, perhaps by building a house or adding an irrigation ditch, they agreed on a sum and drew on a sheet of paper a map of the field and each took his half of the map. There was no other form of contract, no registration, and no tax. It is remarkable that this old custom of the map as deed of sale and title deed prevailed at late as 1911–1921.

423 618 These customs seem to indicate absolute independence and equality as between individual members of the clan in taking possession of community land in order to make a living. It would seem that all the members of the clan agree with each other's fundamental right to make a living, to improve themselves financially, and to do so by whatever means they personally consider adequate or necessary, as long as these means are not prejudicial to the interests of others.

Looking back to what has been said above about the chief of the clan and the way in which he is "chosen" and appointed by the elders, it is plain that the community, represented by the elders, was originally the possessor and dispenser of the clan territory. The supremacy of the chief came late and was a kind of usurpation. We learn from history that at all times usurpers have existed. It is clear that by the time of Chingis Khan the holder of a fief was the real proprietor. The fief was a definite territory granted the fief-holder. Its inhabitants were his vassals and he was the vassal of the emperor. He was the "owner" of both the vassals and the territory,

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under the higher "ownership" of the emperor.[42] The chiefs of the Monguors and Shat'o in Kansu must have been feudatories of this kind under the Mongol dynasty. Among nomads living in an extensive territory the territorial rights of the nomad lord over his vassals were not exercised in the same way as among farming and sedentary peoples. They took primarily the form of the power of the chief to order and regulate the movements of herds and herders according to grazing needs at different seasons, to summon men for military service, and to requisition labor for other services.

For the Monguors and Shat'o, living in the relatively small territories assigned to them by the emperor, the problem was not one of wide grazing movement but of concentration for frontier defense. The chiefs were "owners" of the territory, and of the subjects whose military services they commanded, but within the limited territory each clan member was free to settle and cultivate at his own choice, and to treat all uncultivated land as "common pasture" for grazing.

The strongly "individual" character of the right of property in the Monguor society predominates over the social, civil, and political aspects of property, and deserves attention because it is a fundamental principle still fully understood, recognized, and applied by relatively primitive peoples, but often disregarded by sociologists.

T'U-SSU LORD OF THE COMMONERS

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The distinctive mark of a commoner is to be bound to his T'u-ssu. As already explained above, commoners were subjects granted to a chief, to serve him in time of peace and to fight under his command in time of war.[43] Since his subjects were his only source for the recruiting of troops, the military importance of a T'u-ssu corresponded to the number of his families of commoners. Although the social condition of the commoners was not that of the slave, the *nullum caput habens* of the Roman law,[44] the basic distinction between nobles and common-

[42] Compare Lord Bryce's comment, *Holy Roman Empire*, 122–124, 229, New York, Macmillan, 1904, that in feudal Europe "real sovereignty" resided in the fief.—O. L.

[43] An element of agreement or bargaining may also be noted. When the "founding ancestor" submitted to the Ming dynasty, he was already (*a*) the leader of a group of his noble kinsmen and (*b*) in control of a number of commoners, perhaps originally the conquered subjects of his ancestors, perhaps "granted" to his ancestors by the preceding Mongol dynasty. His "bargain" with the Ming was that, without fighting, he offered them his allegiance as the man who was able to bring this military manpower into their service. The part played by the Ming was to accept the "bargain" by confirming and sustaining the T'u-ssu in his primacy among his kinsmen and his lordship over the commoners.—O. L.

[44] Vladimirtsov, *op. cit.*, 80. In the old Mongol society the vassals were not slaves. They were allowed to possess their own property, to raise their own cattle. They enjoyed a certain amount of liberty. The suzerain did not absorb all the fruits of their labor. On the other hand, they were bound to serve him in time of peace and to fight for him in time of war; to accompany his clan when they migrated to new pastures, and always

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624 as the seat of authority that is the true center of administration. The tour through his territory seems to recall the older nomad society in its reassertion of personal control over the subjects, securing the cohesion of the clan and binding the subjects to the territory. The procedure may be compared with that of the Mongols, among whom every three years the register of the population is brought up to date and a large meeting of the Banner is held.[53] Among the Manchus, the general meeting of the clan is usually held once a year and never less frequently than once in three years.[54] Among the Monguors, it is to be noted that the T'u-ssu, in addition to his triennial tour, presides once a year over the meeting of the whole clan on the day of the veneration of the ancestors.

THE T'U-SSU LORD OF THE NOBLES

173 At the seat of the T'u-ssu is kept the register of all the noble families and their members. Even the girls are ● 618 noted and the families into which they marry. The difference between this register and the book of genealogies of the nobles lies in the fact that in the book of genealogies the birth of children, whether boys or girls, is not noted. A noble is entered in the book of genealogies as of the day of his death, on which date are noted the day of his birth and the name of his wife. The names of unmarried sons are not inscribed because they have not produced sons for the clan; the names of girls are omitted because they are "outsiders," taking the name of a different clan as soon as they are married. The register of the noble families is more elaborate, because each member of the family, boys and girls alike, is assessed a levy of 50 coins for the upkeep of the ancestral temple.

THE TRIENNAL VISIT

624 574 At the triennial visit of the T'u-ssu among the nobles, the register is brought up to date. Because the nobles live scattered in the villages among the commoners and the members of the same House do not necessarily live in the same village, the visit of the T'u-ssu is so ordered that he visits the Houses one after another on fixed days. All members of a House must gather at the home of some one member. They are expected to invite the T'u-ssu and to send horses for his retinue. The picture of the guardian deity of the clan accompanies the T'u-ssu, and a reception is held during which the members of the generation senior to the T'u-ssu bow to him, while members of junior generations prostrate themselves. The hosts must provide a dinner at which the T'u-ssu presides as chief over all his noble kinsmen. Topics of [431] interest to the nobles are discussed, and though they offer him no money, they present him with a piece of cloth

[53] E. Timkovskii, *Voyage en Chine par la Mongolie en 1820 et 1821*, 1, 113, 321, Paris, 1827.

[54] Shirokogoroff, *op. cit*, 51.

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175 was acting as regent of the most powerful of all the Monguor clans, the Lu clan, went so far as to send valuable presents to the Muslim general, Ma K'o-ch'eng, in Hsining, who was the all-powerful warlord of the region, imploring him to become the "dry father"—that is to say, the adoptive father and protector—of her adopted son of eleven years of age. The general accepted and the boy and his mother traveled the long distance from Liench'eng to Hsining in order to perform the filial rites symbolizing the "dry fatherhood."

•618 769 It was in these circumstances that I had the great good fortune to attend probably the last gathering of a clan that was held with the pomp and splendor of former days. This was the clan of the Ch'i T'u-ssu which carried out the ceremony of venerating the founding ancestor at the old cemetery, called Ch'i-chia fenyuan, or "cemetery of the Ch'i family," at T'angpa. According to the old custom, such an assembly should be held every year at the grave of the founding ancestor, on the Chinese festival of Ch'ing Ming, when ancestors are honored all

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769 over China. The festival, calculated according to the lunar calendar, usually falls about the beginning of
● 618 April. The assembly of the clan is concerned with three matters: the veneration of ancestors, a great feast, and an assize at which all topics concerning the clan are open for discussion.

MONGUOR CEMETERIES

764 It is plain from the descriptions that have already been given that the burial customs of the Monguors in recent
172 times have been heavily overlaid with Chinese borrowings. There are, however, indications of more ancient customs. People told that in 1906, after very heavy rains, a wall near the village of Hsinyuanp'u on the spur of a mountain in the valley of Shat'ang collapsed and a big vaulted burial chamber was revealed. It had been built with very large bricks. It contained a coffin, which had rotted away, in which there was the skeleton of a man. His clothes had rotted, but the remains of a bow, arrows, and quiver were found. Before the coffin there lay the skeleton of a horse. The saddle had also rotted,

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692 nobles and non-nobles, chiefs of villages, and officials of the administration in attendance. A large number of Monguors sat around the tent, taking a keen interest in the proceedings. The matters discussed were for the most part of the same kind as those dealt with when the T'u-ssu makes his triennial tour of the villages: taxes and corvées were discussed and fixed, inquiries were made about the observance of traditions, the register of subjects was checked over, military matters were reviewed, and disputes between villages adjudicated. The T'u-ssu appointed or dismissed a number of chiefs, village elders, and military commanders. At these assizes suits may be brought for personal adjudication by the T'u-ssu, who metes out punishment according to custom.

The expenses of this annual assembly are shared by the subjects; while the offerings for the ancestors are paid for by the nobles—a division of expenses that again underlines the difference between the inner clan of common blood-descent and the extended clan of political subjects. Usually by the third day there are no more tents in the valley, the merchants have dispersed, and the T'u-ssu returns to his mansion. Such were the proceedings at the last glorious annual assembly of the clan of the Ch'i-T'u-ssu, which I had the good fortune to attend in 1913.

REMARKS

•618 624 The description of the organization of the Monguor clans and their administration is based on the pattern of the large clans. It is easy to understand that the display of pomp at the diets is related to the importance of the clans, the number of their clan members, and their wealth, and also to the wealth and prestige of the T'u-ssu. Small clans finish the three acts of their diet in a single day, always keeping the difference and deference between nobles and commoners at the time of worshipping of the founding ancestor. In small clans however, constituted by only 150 families or so, both groups necessarily are not numerous and the diet is more like a family gathering and is more informal. Since the clan is small, all the circumstances of each family are known by the T'u-ssu and he himself tackles all the problems of the clan with the elders; the collection of land taxes by nobles is necessarily reduced to a minimum, but the nobles are always exempted from taxes and corvées. Corvées are necessarily reduced in the same way, since the mansion of the T'u-ssu is usually a small Chinese courtyard without temples and administrative buildings. Inevitably the distance which separates T'u-ssu from commoners is minimized, because the commoners may confer directly with the T'u-ssu. In the large clan it is not easy for the commoner to meet the T'u-ssu, for soldiers watch the entrance of his mansion, requests have to be written by the secretaries and forwarded by messengers to the lord, and it is uncertain if the lord will allow the Monguor commoner to see him or not. Because the distance

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618 is strictly kept, the prestige and authority of the lord are
624 inevitably increased.

In small clans, when the T'u-ssu is a haughty and supercilious man, or an opium addict and gambler exacting in his demands for corvées and greedy for the money of his subjects, he is easily criticized and despised because the distance between him and his subjects is reduced, and the commoners get into open arguments with him, and rebel and accuse him in the Chinese court. In the lack of distance between the T'u-ssu and subjects and the waning authority of the T'u-ssu lies the secret of the fact that it is in the small clans that commoners most easily leave their chiefs, giving the Chinese officials the opportunity to reduce both commoners and T'u-ssu to the rank of Chinese subjects and to confiscate their territory. It is no wonder that the clans which have disappeared are the small clans.

IV. THE VILLAGE

FORMATION OF THE VILLAGE

621 The Monguor village consists (1911–1922) of a
361 group of families living in a well defined territory and subject to the immediate authority of the chief of the village. Since the villagers all till the soil and keep cattle, the population is large or small according to the fertility of the soil and the extent of the pastures.

Most farmers, however, live in small hamlets. The patrilineal family system seems to favor this kind of grouping. When the paternal inheritance is divided, the sons build small houses near the old one, bring new lands under cultivation, and small groups of related families, living close together, spring up all over the territory.

Wealthy Monguors hire poor people to cultivate their fields and herd their cattle, and build small houses for them near their own. Wealthy Monguors also give in to the desires of their wives and daughters-in-law and allow poor relatives to build small houses near their own. They lend them [illegible] to plow their fields, and as they prosper the group increases and the hamlet grows into a village.

361 A third factor promoting the grouping of families
621 was, in the past, the chronic insecurity of the country,
721 ravaged by recurring inroads of Tibetans and Mongols. According to tradition the Monguors, when they first came into this territory, still lived in tents. At that time it was easy to pick up the tent and move out of the path of invasion; but once they began to live in houses, the houses had to be defended. Wealthy people in the outlying territory built a high thick mud wall around their houses. To these enclosures the poor families fled in time of trouble, helping in the defense of the small community. Wealthy people, therefore, liked to see the hamlet increased by the addition of poor families, who provided more manpower for defense. All over the country numerous ruins of strongholds are the enduring witnesses of the bad old times. [p. 73-6]

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The Ming dynasty was strongest in the first century and a half of its rule. After that, from 1509 to the founding of the Manchu dynasty in 1644, and from then until 1723, recurrent forays and revolts never left the country at peace. At one time, a Chinese army of a hundred thousand men had to be sent to garrison this frontier region (*Annals* of Hsining, ch. 31, p. 13*b*). In 1537 orders were given to build more mud walled villages, and in 1595 orders came again to repair the old fortifications and to build more new fortified villages (*Annals* of Hsining, ch. 31, pp. 15*a*, 19*a*). It is worth noting that Liench'eng, the seat of the Lu clan, means "associated cities," since in the region of Liench'eng thirteen strongholds were built by the T'u-ssu, most of them still extant.

These notices in the *Annals* suggest that few fortified villages had previously existed, but that from this time the population began to group itself around small strongholds, the more important of which grew into fortified villages.

The Monguor clan was a military institution, originally shaped on the Mongol nomadic pattern, with a decimal system of groups of 10, 100, and 1,000 families and a hierarchy of military command from the largest unit of 10,000 down to the smallest of 10. When the Monguors became farmers, the process of settling broke up these units, with the result that families that had once belonged to the same military unit were scattered among different farming groups. It then became necessary to make a new military grouping based on the distribution of villages. This led to a system of villages in which the head of the village was also the military chief, and in which the military interest of defense was coordinated with such community interests as the maintenance of irrigation canals. The transformation of villages in which some families were subject to mobilization under military units in other villages into a system in which the military unit coincided with the residential community seems to have been brought about not by planning but by a natural adjustment.

A Monguor village may be described as "loose," in contrast with the Chinese "compact" village. It is not a large place included between four strong, thick mud walls, with a small gate easy to defend, but a defined territory in which the people live on their farms, scattered in small groups, under the rule of the chief of the territory. Each "village" has a share of pasture for the herds of the whole community and a valley for the cutting of wood and fuel by all members of the community.

It sometimes has a central stronghold in which live some twenty or thirty families. Sometimes, though not usually, the mansion of the T'u-ssu and the administrative buildings of the clan are also within the stronghold, together with a couple of shops, one of which is always the indispensable pharmacy with a Chinese "physician." Again in contrast with the Chinese pattern, there are rarely any "streets" laid out at right angles, for the

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lasted for two days, presided over by the maternal uncle of the murderer. Finally, the uncle decided that his sister's son should be buried alive, on the principle of a life for a life; that the murderer's father should defray all the expenses of the coffin, clothes, dinner and ceremonial for his own brother's funeral, should invite lamas to pray, and should give alms to the lamasery.

A document was drawn up in which the maternal uncle testified that he took the responsibility for the punishment, and to this all the chiefs of the families affixed their signatures, testifying that they agreed to abide by the decision of the maternal uncle and that they would not accuse the murderer before a Chinese court. The sons of the murdered uncle had threatened to take the case to a Chinese court, and if that had been done not only would capital punishment have been inflicted, but both families would have been ruined by the Chinese officials. The capital punishment was therefore meted out by the Monguors themselves, the maternal uncle taking the responsibility. Under the then prevailing standards, the Chinese officials, who had both administrative and justiciary powers, would take no notice of such a case of traditional and publicly approved justice unless it were formally brought before them by the relatives of the murdered man.

A deep pit was dug, thorns and brambles were thrown into it, and the murderer, cursed and disowned by his family, naked and bound hand and foot, was pushed into the hole and buried alive.[16] The coffin of the murdered uncle was placed upon the pit and a mound piled over it. The family was ruined.

A similar case happened in 1914 in the valley of Lumench'eng. A wife killed her husband at night with a hammer. In this case, the family of the husband with his maternal uncle was opposed to the family of the wife with her maternal uncle. Since the murder of a husband by his wife also deserves capital punishment in Chinese courts, and since the family of the husband threatened to take the case to the Chinese court, the maternal uncle decreed capital punishment for his niece. She was buried alive.

In addition to capital punishment decreed by the maternal uncle for his sister's children, lesser punishments —often of a severe nature—were also administered.

In 1916, in Tolong,[17] an unmarried youngster was severely beaten by his two brothers at night for theft. He was a black sheep, having brought disrepute on his family. In the morning he was found hanging from a beam. The maternal uncle and the chiefs of the family were invited to a meeting at which it was decided that an atonement should be paid to the maternal uncle.

[16] It is possible that carrying out of the sentence of death by burying alive is influenced by the idea that, by not shedding blood, the chain of revenge and counter-revenge is broken, and the family of the man thus put to death feels no obligation to take up a new "blood-feud."—O. L.

[17] A place-name probably from Monguor *dolon*, "seven."

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